Best Road Trip

*NEW ENGLAND, USA

Thirteen separate pointbreaks in 13.5 miles. And that's just New Hampshire. Tack on Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Maine, and you get beachbreaks, reefs and big-wave venues all within a day's striking distance. "From Rhode Island to the Maine border is literally two or three hours," says photographer Brian Nevins. "You could do Ruggles in the morning and hit the Ogunquit Rivermouth that night." But why blast warp speed across state lines when you can explore each nook and cranny? Need directions? Step one: hug the coast and head north. Step two: stop and surf when you see something good. It's that easy. And fall is the perfect time to do it. Not just because you can get both hurricanes and early winter lows to cover both swell directions. Not just because the gloves are still off after a long hot summer, but because this already dramatic rocky shoreline goes certifiably psycho with fall colors, making for a breathtaking backdrop to every session. The tourist crowds are gone. The diehard locals are laugh-hard friendly. The lobster is virtually free. And when you're ready to surf someplace new, just drive 'til you find it. Turn one more corner and you'll find it again.

SEASON: Early September to late October.

WAVES: A wicked pissah of points, reefs, slabs and sandbars.

COST: Depends. Newport, RI and Cape Cod, MA are the birthplace of the phrase "old money"; New Hampshire and Maine's more rural sides are quite reasonable.

X-FACTOR: For every Named Spot, there's at least two secret ones. Just remember: if you find something good, make like the locals and clam up.

EQUIPMENT: The closer you get to the Bay of Fundy, the less salinity in the water, so some extra float can't hurt. Neither will a 7'0", if Ruggles is on your hit list.

BE SURE TO: Bring a camera. From Boston's urban flair to the far north fishing villages to the registered historical landmarks, New England is awash in Kodak moments.

WATCH OUT FOR: Hurricanes. Hey, even the Cape gets its scrapes. And if you're chasing one this far north, you're in the strike zone.

Highway 95 is holding. New Hampshire You-turn. PHOTO: NEVINS